

Remarks

A. Claims

Claims 1-27 were pending at the time of the last Office Action. Claims 1, 10-11, 15-17, 21 and 27 have been amended. Support for the amendments may be found throughout the specification -- for example, at page 13. No new matter has been added.

Prior to the amendment, the Examiner phoned Applicants' representative and expressed concern that wording of the claims could be interpreted as requiring a packet forming at a pressure less than or equal to a hold-off pressure, in apparent contradiction to the specification. The non-narrowing amendments above clarify the claims by reciting the formation and extraction of a packet.

During the telephone conversation with the Examiner, it was indicated that amendments such as the ones presented here would be acceptable to overcome the concerns of the Patent Office. In this regard, Applicants point out that amended independent claims 1, 16, 17 and 21, and all their dependent claims are clear, enabled, and sufficiently described in compliance with 35 U.S.C. §112.

Applicants respectfully request a notice of allowance and thank the Office for the courtesies extended during the Examiner's phone call to Applicants' representative.

B. Fees

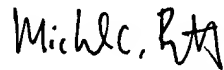
No fees are believed to be due. However, should any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 to 1.21 be deemed necessary for any reason relating to this response, the Office is authorized to deduct from Fulbright & Jaworski Deposit Account No.: 50-1212/UTSC:657US/MCB.

SN 09/883,109

C. Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-27 are in condition for allowance. Should there be any questions, please do not hesitate to call the undersigned attorney at (512) 536-3018.

Respectfully submitted,



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